



# **“Leave no one behind”**

## Contributions from our Bridge Building activities to the UN Agenda 2030

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# What is BB?



The European Centre set a special focus on (potential) EU candidate countries and the countries of the Eastern Partnership - the so-called Bridge Building countries (BB countries) to assist in improving social welfare policies.

Our ongoing activities:

- ❖ Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and joint activities with our National Liaison Officials (NLOs)
- ❖ Unique EESPN network (Eastern European Social Policy Network)
- ❖ Project work (externally and internally funded)



# BB contributions to the UN Agenda 2030

## At territorial level:

We apply international, regional (transnational/cross-country), national and sub-national approaches in contributing to “leaving no one behind” when conducting research and advising policy makers.

## At content level:

We focus on policies aiming at reducing poverty and promote wellbeing; thereby helping the most vulnerable groups of society, strengthening social support systems and building joint understanding on strong social policies.

## At process level:

We assist in developing the reform agenda, support policy development and evaluation and facilitate joint learning and exchanges between countries to enable smooth transition towards a Social Europe.









## Our approach

- ❖ Identifying needs across BB and EU countries
- ❖ Inclusive approaches & exchange at the same eye level
- ❖ Co-creation of innovative approaches
- ❖ Joint implementation of solutions in response to the needs
- ❖ Monitoring progress
- ❖ Development of recommendations

## Identifying needs across BB and EU countries

- ❖ Often, BB and EU countries face similar challenges in **adjusting their social and labour market systems** to changes in how we work and live (digitalisation & automatisisation processes, labour migration, demographic change, COVID-19, etc.)
- ❖ All countries face the need to develop **socially innovative approaches** to ensure sustainability of social support systems such as
  - ❖ **Interventions at different governance levels (local, regional, national and international)** to strengthen LTC systems
  - ❖ **Integrated policy responses** to help those most in need
- ❖ Reduce socio-economic inequality and protect vulnerable groups

Ministry focus	Possible topics (selected)	SDGs
Social	Health and social consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic	 
	Empowerment of vulnerable groups and women/girls	
	Social innovation, social partners, social dialogue	
Health	Innovative active employment and social policy	 
	Integrated case management system	
	Long-term care, active ageing	
Care	Public health, substance abuse	 
	Rights and inequalities of women and girls	
	Women & employment, social services, poverty reduction	

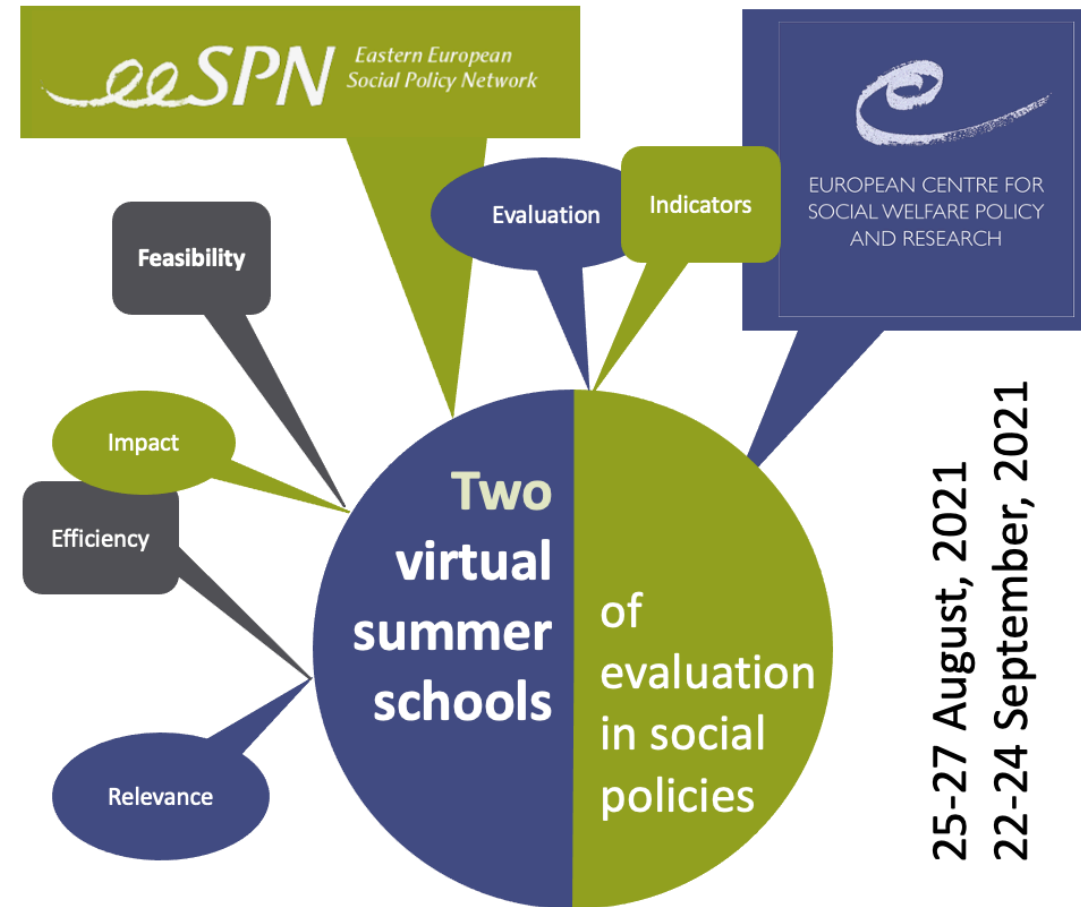
## Inclusive approaches & exchange at the same eye level

- ❖ Facilitate exchange/learning both **within countries** (between different stakeholders) and **between countries**
- ❖ Share knowledge and experience **between different stakeholder groups** (civil servants, NGOs, social partners, research, etc.)
- ❖ **Learning between peers** enables receiving practical information and hands-on experiences in implementing policy strategies & actions
- ❖ Mutual understanding is the basis for **building trust** between civil servants of different states and a precondition for successful knowledge exchange



## Example: Exchange at the same eye level (Summer School 2021)

- ❖ 2 virtual summer schools
- ❖ Response to increased demand for the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of social policies
- ❖ **Capacity building** to enhance knowledge and share information on the state-of-the-art research and policy practice
- ❖ **Peer learning and mutual exchange** of experiences among participants
- ❖ **Fostering collaboration and developing ideas** for hands-on projects to contribute to strengthening evaluation
- ❖ Strengthening and expanding the Eastern European Social Policy Network (EESPN)



## Co-creation of innovative approaches

- ❖ **Building consensus** and **stakeholder coalitions** are essential parts of innovation and reform processes, which often rely on the meaningful involvement of relevant stakeholder

### Example: InCARE project

- ❖ Multi-stakeholder participatory approach within a Theory of Change framework
- ❖ Involvement of **service users & families** in service design and development (both directly or indirectly through data collection on preferences, attitudes and expectations)
- ❖ Involvement of **local organizations** in the design and implementation of service delivery pilots
- ❖ Involvement of **national stakeholders** in design and planning, with a focus on long-term sustainability and scale-up



## Joint implementation of solutions in response to the needs

- ❖ Local **ownership** within a facilitating national policy framework and with technical support
- ❖ Setting up **mutual learning labs** for the exchange of knowledge and information among the participating sending and receiving countries in the frame of the posting of workers to improve transnational multi-stakeholder cooperation between public authorities, social partners and the research community
- ❖ **Hands-on pilots** that provide specific states with detailed recommendations for action as part of a strategy implementation plan or action plan and that builds on reflection during the joint peer reviews
- ❖ Joint project implementation frequently follows topic-related, target-group oriented and **structure changing** aims.

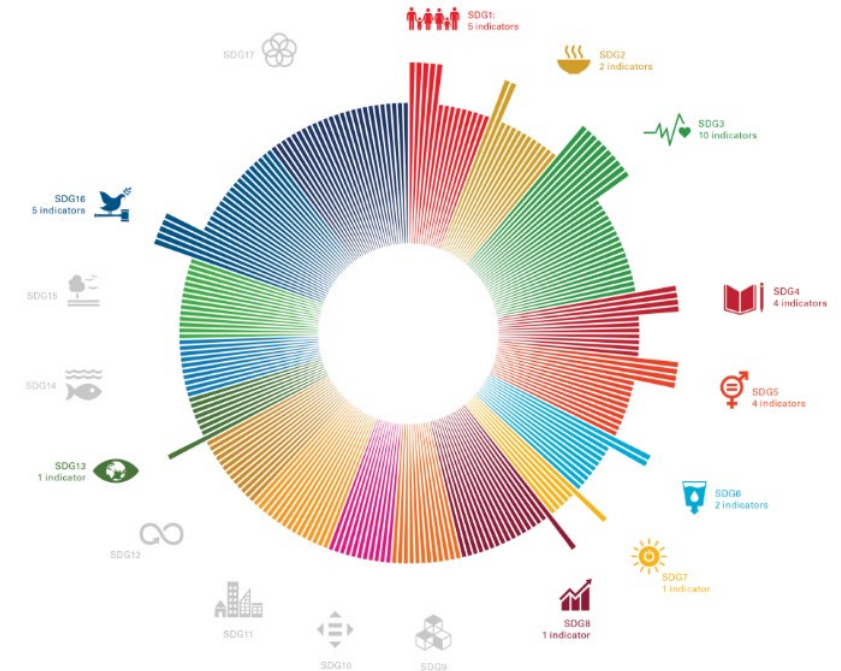
Topic-related aim

Target group-oriented aim

Structure-changing aim

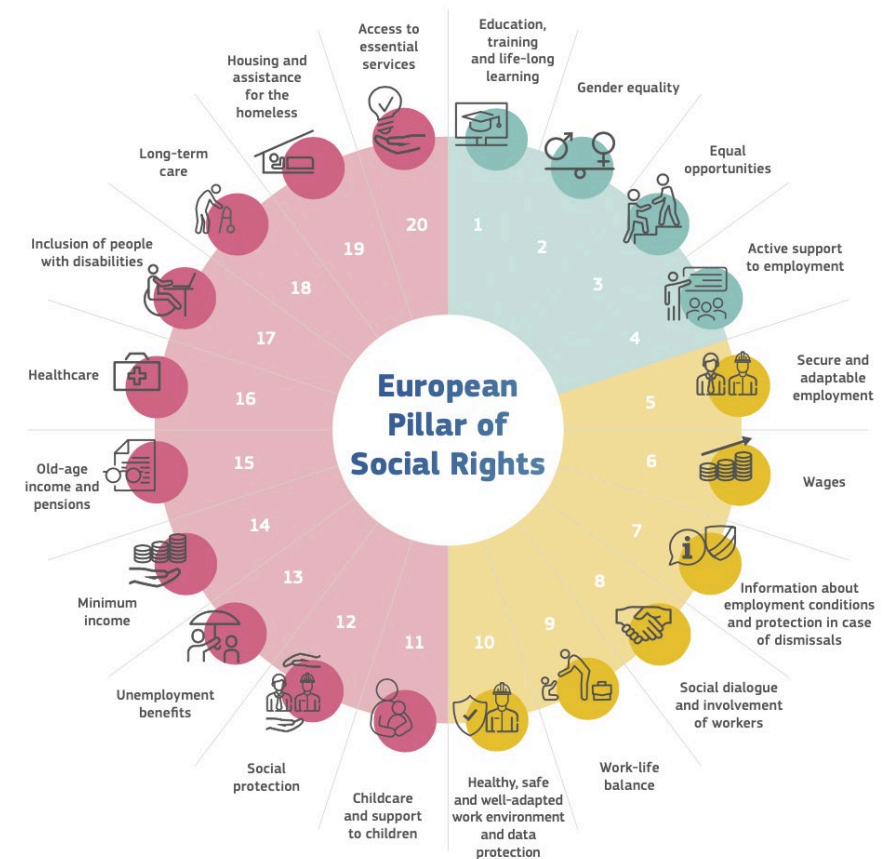
## Monitoring progress

- ❖ Theory of Change framework (including both process & outcome evaluation) geared towards **scale-up and long-term sustainability** (InCARE)
- ❖ Ex-post system review, policy analysis and monitoring for the **Situation Analysis of Children and Adolescents** (UNICEF Moldova)
- ❖ Monitoring progress regarding the **European Pillar of Social Rights** in the Western Balkan region – see example



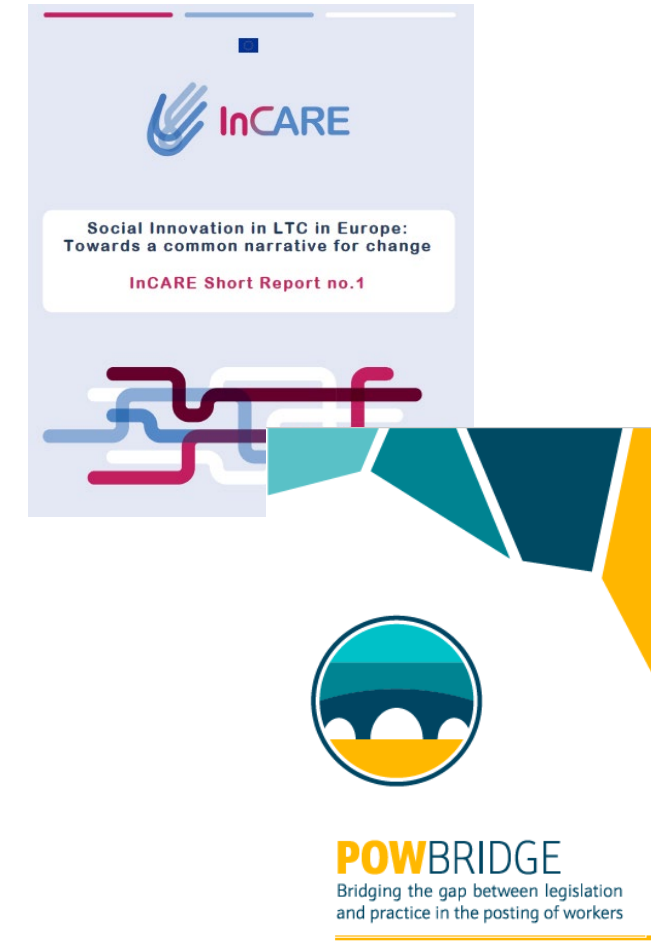
## Example: Monitoring progress (social indicators)

- ❖ Monitoring progress regarding the European Pillar of Social Rights in the Western Balkan region
- ❖ Economic and social upward convergence in the Western Balkan Region is important for social cohesion towards the EU
- ❖ Focus on risks COVID-19 pandemic has posed to the public health and systems
- ❖ Despite some progress in social indicators, welfare and labour market outcomes remain generally weak
- ❖ Need for ensuring access to social protection, education, and labour market
- ❖ Strengthen institutional capacities and monitoring practices



## Developing recommendations

- ❖ Co-production of materials/ tools to ensure relevance and understandability (including by publishing key materials in local languages)
- ❖ Targeted recommendations - summarizing lessons learned for a variety of audiences – e.g. policy roadmaps & briefs, short reports, information notes, academic articles)
- ❖ Tailor policy suggestions regarding strengthening social indicators to the country levels and regional levels, and jointly convene stakeholders from the European Commission and Western Balkan countries
- ❖ To strengthen the evidence-base between procedures (legal basis) and practices (experiences) in posting rule enactment



# Conclusion



No one size fits all! ... but also... No need to reinvent the wheel!

Our work focuses on developing local capacity, co-producing and customizing solutions to local needs, encouraging local ownership and empowering our local partners to lead the way

There is an equal need to **dedicate effort and resources** to the **development of 'best-fit' policy solutions** and the **development of broad partnerships and ally networks** that can support implementation



